

Arlington Redevelopment Board
Monday, October 5, 2020, 7:00 PM
Meeting Conducted Remotely via Zoom
Meeting Minutes

This meeting was recorded by ACMi.

PRESENT: Rachel Zsembery (Chair), Eugene Benson, Kin Lau, Katherine Levine-Einstein, David Watson

STAFF: Jennifer Raitt, Director of Planning and Community Development, and Erin Zwirko, Assistant Director, Kelly Lynema, Senior Planner

The Chair called the meeting to order and notified all attending that the meeting is being recorded by ACMi.

The Chair explained that this meeting is being held remotely in accordance with the Governor's March 12, 2020 order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, Section 20. This order from Governor Baker allows for meetings to be held remotely during this time to avoid public gatherings.

The Chair introduced the first agenda item, the public hearing for Docket #2717, as amended #2905, 23 Broadway for Eskar LLC. The Chair explained that the applicant is requesting to open a Marijuana Retail establishment in the B2A major business district. Mary Winstanley-O'Connor introduced herself as the representative for Eskar LLC. Ms. Winstanley-O'Connor said that the environmental impact statement she submitted reviews the outstanding safety and traffic issues for the Environmental Design Review. Ms. Winstanley-O'Connor said that the establishment meets the Town's host community agreement requirements. Sales will be appointment only for the first month and the Arlington Police Department has been consulted and will assist with the traffic plan.

Mike Hunnewell, President of Eskar LLC, introduced himself and his business partner Michael Aldi and welcomed questions from the board. Ms. Raitt said that the traffic projections are correct and pre-pandemic numbers were used for those projections as used for a previous request for a similar use. Ms. Raitt said that the lot was previously approved as a non-conforming lot under the previous docket. Mr. Hunnewell described the circulation pattern inside the building and for customers on the retail floor.

Mr. Benson asked about the design updates, the parking report, and traffic report and Mr. Hunnewell said that Eskar intends to follow the traffic report suggestions. Mr. Benson asked about the LEED score Mr. Hunnewell and Ms. Winstanley-O'Connor said that they have to review the LEED report and the parking report. Mr. Benson asked about the number of employees and to have the indoor bicycle parking included on the floor plan.

Mr. Watson asked to have the detailed design of the indoor bicycle parking included with the plans and asked that the proponents review the Town's bicycle parking requirements. Mr. Benson asked about parking and the possibility of securing overflow parking, managing the hourly customer flow, and the new curb cut on Sunnyside Ave. Mr. Benson asked if this site location meets the buffer zone requirements and Ms. Raitt confirmed that this location does meet the requirements and there is an existing curb cut on Sunnyside Ave. Mr. Benson asked if the Town's Transportation Advisory Committee had any concerns about the traffic report and Ms. Raitt said that the report was reviewed by the Sr. Transportation Planner and she will share the report with members of TAC for their feedback.

Mr. Lau asked about the loading dock and parking by the loading area Mr. Aldi said that deliveries will only happen during off-hours. Mr. Lau asked if the rear exit, with steps, was handicapped accessible. Mr. Hunnewell said that they will ensure they have a plan for an accessible exit. Mr. Lau asked to rethink the plan to use glass bricks in the facade as they block visibility. Mr. Lau asked about parking lot drainage and Ms. Raitt said that there are no changes made to the parking lot so

improvements to the parking lot are not required.

Ms. Levine-Einstein wanted to confirm that plans for pedestrian and cyclist safety will be included with the project. The Chair asked for plans with details about the signage on the front of the building and any signage in the parking area. The Chair said she would like to see a proposal to understand what the window screen/film will look like on the first floor to ensure that the area still looks like a vibrant street scape. The Chair said she agrees with Mr. Lau regarding the use of glass bricks in the façade and asked to review the stars at the sales floor exit. The Chair echoed Mr. Benson's concern about the LEED scores but understands that with the existing HVAC system the scores may not be able to be improved greatly. Mr. Watson suggested subsidized MBTA passes for employees and providing a shower and changing area to encourage employees to bike to work. Ms. Winstanley-O'Connor said that subsidized MBTA passes are in their transportation plan and Mr. Hunnewell said they will look to see what they can do about an employee shower. Mr. Lau asked about an employee breakroom. Mr. Aldi said that they will use the area labeled as packaging for the employee dining/breakroom area. The Chair opened the floor to public comment.

Don Seltzer, Irving Street, said that he has never seen such a detailed traffic study. Mr. Seltzer asked if the proponents have thought about reversing the direction of traffic flow to enter through Sunnyside Ave. and exit on Broadway. Mr. Seltzer said that he thinks that in the future there may be a substance abuse facility located in the vicinity and asked to the Board to consider the possible conflict.

Mr. Benson asked how customers will know they are supposed to use the parking lot. Mr. Hunnewell said that there will be signage, on the webpage, and included with the text confirmation for customers who order ahead of time.

The Chair reviewed the Board's list of required information to move forward with a hearing continuation: more detailed parking and queue management plan; details for proposed first floor window screening; new design in lieu of the glass block screen; more detail about the building and parking lot signage; provide a civil drawing with the Transportation consultant's recommendations, including the stop sign and the asphalt lettering ; LEED scorecard review with possible plans for improvements; bike parking plans for both indoors and outdoors; provide plans for possible employee shower and changing room; Transportation Planner to review the transportation plan and provide more specific items related to the impact to queuing on the street and possible one way turn onto Sunnyside Ave; review steps at retail exit regarding property line and accessibility; review plans for the loading dock; and employee breakroom plan details.

Mr. Lau moved to continue this hearing to November 2, 2020 and Mr. Benson seconded, approved 5-0.

The Chair introduced the second agenda item, Committee Appointment: Alex Bagnall, Envision Arlington Standing Committee. Ms. Raitt introduced Mr. Bagnall and explained that Mr. Bagnall may be presenting updates to the Board. Mr. Bagnall said he has been a Town Meeting Member for the past four years and thanked the Board for this opportunity to work with Envision Arlington and the Board's efforts regarding housing.

Mr. Benson moved to appoint Alex Bagnall as a member of the Arlington Standing Committee, Mr. Watson seconded, approved 5-0.

The Chair introduced the third agenda item, Presentation and Discussion: Residential Design Guidelines and Design Review Process for R0, R1, R2 Zoning Districts. Ms. Raitt introduced Kelly Lynema, Senior Planner from Arlington's Department of

Planning and Community Development, and Emily Innes and Philip Ho from Harriman. Ms. Lynema introduced herself and provided the background for this project. Ms. Lynema explained that the guidelines are intended to balance desires of property owners, the general public, and interests of the Arlington community while building the codified balances between these different needs into existing approval process structures. Ms. Lynema said that Harriman took the responses from the community engagement period to create the draft guideline. Ms. Innes gave an overview of Harriman's existing conditions analysis for Arlington. Ms. Innes said that the final presentation for the public should take place in December 2020. Ms. Lynema said that the draft guidelines will be presented to the Zoning Board of Appeals by the end of October 2020 and will be looking for feedback by November 6, 2020.

Mr. Benson asked about public participation during the COVID-19 shut down. Ms. Innes said that there were 1,200 online responses and feels that volume of responses is more than would have been received in person. Mr. Benson said he does have a concern for those without internet access. Ms. Lynema said Harriman received a wider age range of participants than usual. Mr. Lau asked about parking requirements and possible adjustments that would encourage fewer prominent garages/parking and encourage better architecture. Mr. Benson suggested thinking about including design guidelines regarding the environment, for example solar arrays and smaller lawns. Mr. Benson said the guide has good examples of how home size discrepancies is an issue in neighborhoods, but not a particular style of home. The Chair said the Board could use a guide like this for the commercial zones. Ms. Raitt noted that the Board adopted Design Standards for Commercial and Industrial properties in 2015. The Chair opened the floor for public comments, there were no comments.

The Chair introduced the next agenda item, Meeting Minutes (07/20/20). Mr. Benson moved to approve the 7/20/20 meeting minutes as amended, Mr. Lau seconded, approved 4-0 (Ms. Levine-Einstein abstained as she was not present).

The Chair introduced the next agenda item, Open Forum and opened the floor for public comment. There were no members of the public that wished to speak.

The Chair introduced the last agenda item for the Board, Executive Session. The Chair explained that in order to move into the Executive Session a motion is required to close the public meeting and stop the meeting recording. The Chair amended the motion to open the Executive Session to discuss the pending legal matter regarding the Hotel Lexington property as cited by Town Counsel, Darlow v. Redevelopment Board regarding the Hotel Lexington Special Permit, and to adjourn the meeting directly from the Executive Session. Mr. Benson moved to approve, Mr. Watson seconded, approved 5-0.

Meeting adjourned.